Plan to connect villages by mobile phone services

1032. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan/schemes to connect all the villages of the country by mobile phone service;

(b) if so, by when and the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether there is any target to extend mobile phone service to far-flung rural areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) A scheme has been launched by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to provide subsidy support for seting up 7871 number of infrastructure sites (towers) in 500 districts spread over 27 States for provision of mobile services in the specified rural and remote areas, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage. The infrastructure so created shall be shared by three service providers for provision of mobile services including other Wireless Access Services like Wireless on Local Loop (WLL). The agreement effective from 1.6.2007 have been signed with the successful bidders in May, 2007. Mobile Services through these shared towers are targeted to be made operational in a phased manner by May, 2008. The State-wise number of towers to be set up under this scheme is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) and (d) The Government has planned to cover the other uncovered habitated areas in the country through mobile services for which additional towers are being identified. They will be taken up in Phase II with subsidy support from USOF.

Statement

State-wise number of towers to be set-up under the scheme

Sl. No.	States	No of Districts	No. of Towers
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	22	581
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	12	62
3.	Assam	20	90
4.	Bihar	37	489
5.	Chhattisgarh	16	560
6.	Gujarat	4	66
7.	Haryana	8	14
8.	Himachal Pradesh	11	295
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	12	178
10.	Jharkhand	18	305

1	2	3	4
11.	Karnataka	26	427
12.	Kerala	11	46
13.	Madhya Pradesh	45	985
14.	Maharashtra	33	1017
15.	Manipur	9	95
16.	Meghalaya	7	102
17.	Mizoram	8	71
18.	Nagaland	7	56
19.	Orissa	30	432
20.	Punjab	3	13
21.	Rajasthan	32	411
22.	Sikkim	3	8
23.	Tamil Nadu	27	371
24.	Tripura	4	147
25.	Uttar Pradesh	66	666
26.	Uttaranchal	13	217
27.	West Bengal	16	167
	COUNTRYWIDE TOTAL:	500	7871

Navaratna status to BSNL

1033. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether BSNL has been given 'Navaratna' status like MTNL; and

(b) if no, the reasons thereof with specific eligibility parameters which are not fulfilled for giving 'Navaratna' status?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) BSNL does not fulfill the eligibility criteria of composite score which is based on performance in respect of select financial ratios.

Submarine Cable Landing Station in W.B.

1034. SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN:

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be